

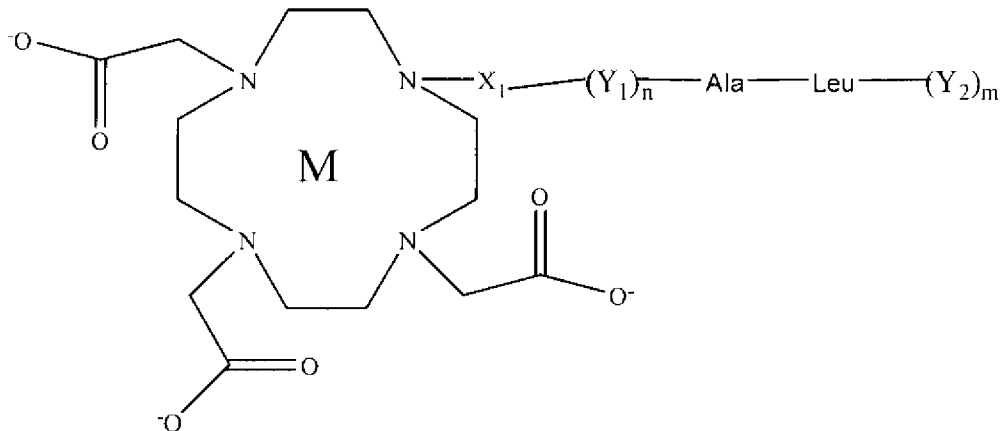
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

a) administering an MRI agent having the formula:



wherein Y₁ and Y₂ are independently chosen amino acid moieties;

n and m are integers each independently ~~an integer~~ chosen from 0 to 5; and

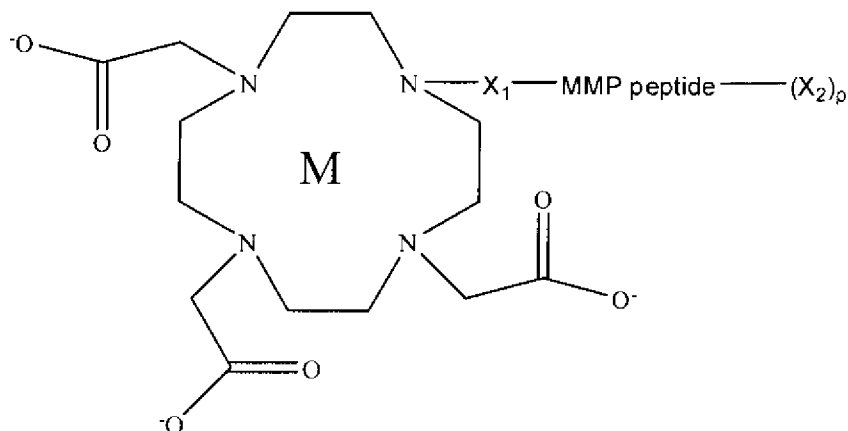
X₁ is an ~~independent~~ a linker; and

~~salts thereof or a salt thereof, wherein said administering step results in an~~
increase in the *q* value of said MRI agent or said salt ; and

b) producing a magnetic resonance image of a cell, tissue, or patient.

20. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

a) administering an activatable MRI agent having the formula:



wherein

M is a paramagnetic metal ion selected from the group consisting of Gd(III), Fe(III), Mn(II), Y(III), Cr(III), Eu(III), and Dy(III);

X₁ is an aryl group or an alkyl group;

X₂ is an aryl group, an alkyl group, a carbohydrate group, a nucleic acid group, or a lipid group;

MMP is a matrix metalloproteinase (MMP) active peptide; and

p is an integer from 0 to 1; and

~~salts thereof~~ or a salt thereof; and

b) contacting said MRI agent under conditions wherein said MMP active peptide is cleaved by ~~interacts~~ interacting with ~~[[a]]~~ an MMP such that ~~the T₁ of the said MRI agent is decreased~~ the q value of said MRI agent is increased; and,

c) producing a magnetic resonance image of a cell, tissue, or patient.

21. **(Previously Presented)** A method according to claim 19, wherein said M is Gd(III).

22. **(Previously Presented)** A method according to claim 20, wherein said M is Gd(III).

23. **(Previously Presented)** A method according to claim 19, wherein X₁ is selected from the group consisting of an aryl or alkyl group.

24 & 25. **(Canceled)**

26. **(Withdrawn)** A method according to claim 19, wherein X₁ is -(CH₂CO)-, Y₁ is -Pro-Met- when n = 2, and Y₂ is -Trp-Met-Arg when m = 1 (SEQ ID NO: 4).

27. **(Withdrawn)** A method according to claim 19, wherein X_1 is $-(CH_2CO)-$, Y_1 is -Met- when $n = 1$, and Y_2 is -Trp-Met-Arg when $m = 3$ (SEQ ID NO:2).

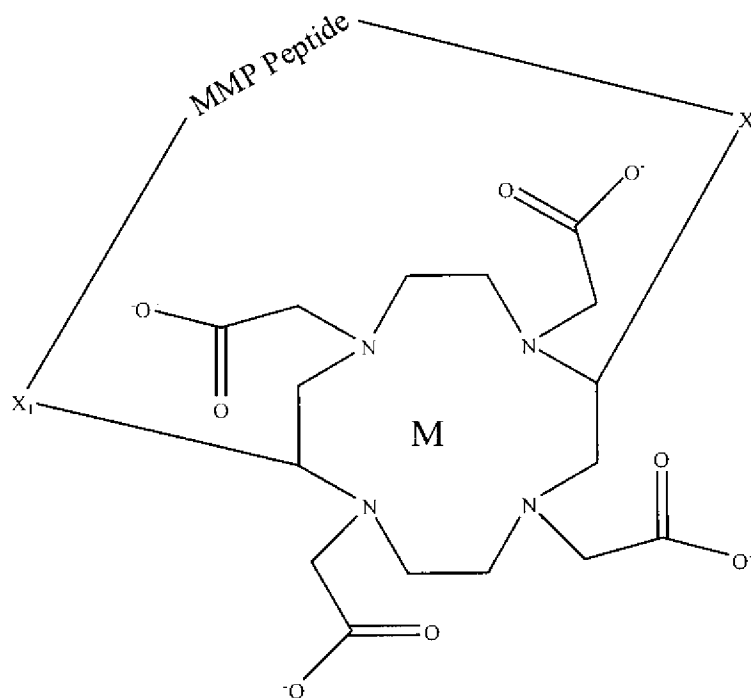
28. **(Withdrawn)** A method according to claim 19, wherein X_1 is $-(CH_2CO)-$, $n = 0$, and Y_2 is -Trp-Met-Arg when $m = 3$ (SEQ ID NO:3).

29. **(Previously Presented)** A method according to claim 20, wherein said MMP is MMP 7.

30. **(Withdrawn)** A method according to claim 20, wherein X_1 is $-(CH_2CO)-$, said MMP peptide comprises Leu-Met-Trp-Arg, and $p = 0$ (SEQ ID NO:20).

31. **(Withdrawn - currently amended)** A method comprising:

a) administering an MRI agent having the formula:



wherein

M is a paramagnetic metal ion selected from the group consisting of $Gd(III)$, $Fe(III)$, $Mn(II)$, $Y(III)$, $Cr(III)$, $Eu(III)$, and $Dy(III)$;

X_1 and X_2 are each independently chosen linkers; and

MMP is a matrix metalloproteinase (MMP) active peptide; ~~and~~
salts thereof; or a salt thereof;

b) contacting said MRI agent under conditions wherein said MMP active peptide interacts with a MMP such that the T_1 of the said MRI agent is decreased; and,

- c) producing a magnetic resonance image of a cell, tissue, or patient.
32. **(Withdrawn)** A method according to claim 31, wherein said M is Gd(III).
33. **(Withdrawn)** A method according to claim 31, wherein X_1 and X_2 are independently selected from the group consisting of p-aminobenzyl or substituted p-aminobenzyl.
34. **(Withdrawn)** A method according to claim 31, wherein said MMP peptide is Pro-Met-Ala-Leu-Trp-Met-Arg (SEQ ID NO: 4).
35. **(Withdrawn)** A method according to claim 31, wherein said MMP is MMP 7.
36. **(Withdrawn)** A method according to claim 31, wherein said MRI agent has the formula:

